

IN THE CLAIMS

This listing of claims replaces all prior listings and versions of the claims in this application:

Listing of Claims

Claim 1 (Currently Amended): In an electrophotographic image forming apparatus comprising an image forming section, which includes an image carrier and image transferring means, for transferring a toner image from said image carrier to a recording medium being conveyed by an endless belt while electrostatically adhering to said belt, assuming that a surface of said image carrier and a surface of said belt move at a speed of V_d and a speed of V_b , respectively, a ratio of V_b/V_d is variable by a user of said image forming apparatus wherein the belt speed V_b is maintained substantially constant.

Claim 2 (Original): The apparatus as claimed in claim 1, wherein said image forming section comprises a plurality of image forming sections each being assigned to a particular color.

Claim 3 (Original): The apparatus as claimed in claim 1, wherein said image carrier and said image transferring means comprise a photoconductive drum and an image transfer roller, respectively.

Claim 4 (Currently Amended): In an electrophotographic image forming apparatus comprising an image forming section, which includes an image carrier and image transferring means, for transferring a toner image from said image carrier to a recording medium being conveyed by an endless belt while electrostatically adhering to said belt, assuming that a surface of said image carrier and a surface of said belt move at a speed of V_d and a speed of

Vb, respectively, a ratio of V_b/V_d is variable by either one of a service person and a person expected to deal with troubles of said image forming apparatus wherein the belt speed V_b is maintained substantially constant.

Claim 5 (Original): The apparatus as claimed in claim 4, wherein said image forming section comprises a plurality of image forming sections each being assigned to a particular color.

Claim 6 (Original): The apparatus as claimed in claim 4, wherein said image carrier and said image transferring means comprise a photoconductive drum and an image transfer roller, respectively.

Claim 7 (Currently Amended): In an electrophotographic image forming apparatus comprising an image forming section, which includes an image carrier and image transferring means, for transferring a toner image from said image carrier to a recording medium being conveyed by an endless belt while electrostatically adhering to said belt, assuming that a surface of said image carrier and a surface of said belt move at a speed of V_d and a speed of V_b , respectively, a ratio of V_b/V_d is variable for each of a plurality of process linear velocities wherein the belt speed V_b is maintained substantially constant.

Claim 8 (Original): The apparatus as claimed in claim 7, wherein said image forming section comprises a plurality of image forming sections each being assigned to a particular color.

Claim 9 (Original): The apparatus as claimed in claim 7, wherein said image carrier and said image transferring means comprise a photoconductive drum and an image transfer roller, respectively.

Claim 10 (Currently Amended): In an electrophotographic image forming apparatus comprising an image forming section, which includes an image carrier and image transferring means, for transferring a toner image from said image carrier to a recording medium being conveyed by an endless belt while electrostatically adhering to said belt, assuming that a surface of said image carrier and a surface of said belt move at a speed of V_d and a speed of V_b , respectively, a ratio of V_b/V_d is variable in accordance with a kind of the recording medium wherein the belt speed V_b is maintained substantially constant.

Claim 11 (Original): The apparatus as claimed in claim 10, wherein said image forming section comprises a plurality of image forming sections each being assigned to a particular color.

Claim 12 (Original): The apparatus as claimed in claim 10, wherein said image carrier and said image transferring means comprise a photoconductive drum and an image transfer roller, respectively.

Claim 13 (Currently Amended): In an electrophotographic color image forming apparatus comprising a plurality of image forming sections, which include an image carrier and primary image transferring means each, arranged side by side in a direction of movement of endless intermediate image transferring means for sequentially transferring toner images from individual image carriers to said intermediate image transferring means with primary

image transferring means and then transferring a resulting composite toner image from said intermediate image transferring means to a recording medium being conveyed at a secondary image transfer position, assuming that a surface of said intermediate image transferring means and a surface of said recording medium move at a speed of V_i and a speed of V_p , respectively, a ratio of V_p/V_i is variable by a user of said image forming apparatus wherein the speed V_i is maintained substantially constant.

Claim 14 (original) The apparatus as claimed in claim 13, wherein said image carriers, said primary image transferring means and said intermediate image transferring means comprise photoconductive drums, image transfer rollers and an intermediate image transfer belt, respectively.

Claim 15 (Currently Amended): In an electrophotographic color image forming apparatus comprising a plurality of image forming sections, which include an image carrier and primary image transferring means each, arranged side by side in a direction of movement of endless intermediate image transferring means for sequentially transferring toner images from individual image carriers to said intermediate image transferring means with primary image transferring means and then transferring a resulting composite toner image from said intermediate image transferring means to a recording medium being conveyed at a secondary image transfer position, assuming that a surface of said intermediate image transferring means and a surface of said recording medium move at a speed of V_i and a speed of V_p , respectively, a ratio of V_p/V_i is variable by a service person or a person expected to deal with troubles of said image forming apparatus wherein the speed V_i is maintained substantially constant.

Claim 16 (Original): The apparatus as claimed in claim 15, wherein said image carriers, said primary image transferring means and said intermediate image transferring means comprise photoconductive drums, image transfer rollers and an intermediate image transfer belt, respectively.

Claim 17 (Currently Amended): In an electrophotographic color image forming apparatus comprising a plurality of image forming sections, which include an image carrier and primary image transferring means each, arranged side by side in a direction of movement of endless intermediate image transferring means for sequentially transferring toner images from individual image carriers to said intermediate image transferring means with primary image transferring means and then transferring a resulting composite toner image from said intermediate image transferring means to a recording medium being conveyed at a secondary image transfer position, assuming that a surface of said intermediate image transferring means and a surface of said recording medium move at a speed of V_i and a speed of V_p , respectively, a ratio of V_p/V_i is variable for each of a plurality of process linear velocities wherein the speed V_i is maintained substantially constant.

Claim 18 (Original): The apparatus as claimed in claim 17, wherein said image carriers, said primary image transferring means and said intermediate image transferring means comprise photoconductive drums, image transfer rollers and an intermediate image transfer belt, respectively.

Claim 19 (Currently Amended): In an electrophotographic color image forming apparatus comprising a plurality of image forming sections, which include an image carrier and primary image transferring means each, arranged side by side in a direction of movement

of endless intermediate image transferring means for sequentially transferring toner images from individual image carriers to said intermediate image transferring means with primary image transferring means and then transferring a resulting composite toner image from said intermediate image transferring means to a recording medium being conveyed at a secondary image transfer position, assuming that a surface of said intermediate image transferring means and a surface of said recording medium move at a speed of V_i and a speed of V_p , respectively, a ratio of V_p/V_i is variable in accordance with a kind of the recording medium wherein the speed V_i is maintained substantially constant.

Claim 20 (Original): The apparatus as claimed in claim 19, wherein said image carriers, said primary image transferring means and said intermediate image transferring means comprise photoconductive drums, image transfer rollers and an intermediate image transfer belt, respectively.

Claim 21 (Currently Amended): In an electrophotographic color image forming apparatus comprising a plurality of image forming sections, which include an image carrier and primary image transferring means each, arranged side by side in a direction of movement of endless intermediate image transferring means for sequentially transferring toner images from individual image carriers to said intermediate image transferring means with primary image transferring means and then transferring a resulting composite toner image from said intermediate image transferring means to a recording medium being conveyed at a secondary image transfer position, assuming that a surface of said image carrier and a surface of said intermediate image transferring means move at a speed of V_d and a speed of V_i , respectively, a ratio of V_d/V_i is variable by a user of said image forming apparatus wherein the speed V_i is maintained substantially constant.

Claim 22 (Original): The apparatus as claimed in claim 21, wherein said image carriers, said primary image transferring means and said intermediate image transferring means comprise photoconductive drums, image transfer rollers and an intermediate image transfer belt, respectively.

Claim 23 (Currently Amended): In an electrophotographic color image forming apparatus comprising a plurality of image forming sections, which include an image carrier and primary image transferring means each, arranged side by side in a direction of movement of endless intermediate image transferring means for sequentially transferring toner images from individual image carriers to said intermediate image transferring means with primary image transferring means and then transferring a resulting composite toner image from said intermediate image transferring means to a recording medium being conveyed at a secondary image transfer position, assuming that a surface of said image carrier and a surface of said intermediate image transferring means move at a speed of V_d and a speed of V_i , respectively, a ratio of V_d/V_i is variable by a service person or a person expected to deal with troubles of said image forming apparatus wherein the speed V_i is maintained substantially constant.

Claim 24 (Original): The apparatus as claimed in claim 23, wherein said image carriers, said primary image transferring means and said intermediate image transferring means comprise photoconductive drums, image transfer rollers and an intermediate image transfer belt, respectively.

Claim 25 (Currently Amended): In an electrophotographic color image forming apparatus comprising a plurality of image forming sections, which include an image carrier

and primary image transferring means each, arranged side by side in a direction of movement of endless intermediate image transferring means for sequentially transferring toner images from individual image carriers to said intermediate image transferring means with primary image transferring means and then transferring a resulting composite toner image from said intermediate image transferring means to a recording medium being conveyed at a secondary image transfer position, assuming that a surface of said image carrier and a surface of said intermediate image transferring means move at a speed of V_d and a speed of V_i , respectively, a ratio of V_d/V_i is variable for each of a plurality of process linear velocities wherein the speed V_i is maintained substantially constant.

Claim 26 (Original): The apparatus as claimed in claim 25, wherein said image carriers, said primary image transferring means and said intermediate image transferring means comprise photoconductive drums, image transfer rollers and an intermediate image transfer belt, respectively.

Claim 27 (Currently Amended): In an electrophotographic color image forming apparatus comprising a plurality of image forming sections, which include an image carrier and primary image transferring means each, arranged side by side in a direction of movement of endless intermediate image transferring means for sequentially transferring toner images from individual image carriers to said intermediate image transferring means with primary image transferring means and then transferring a resulting composite toner image from said intermediate image transferring means to a recording medium being conveyed at a secondary image transfer position, assuming that a surface of said image carrier and a surface of said intermediate image transferring means move at a speed of V_d and a speed of V_i , respectively,

a ratio of V_d/V_i is variable in accordance with a kind of the recording medium wherein the speed V_i is maintained substantially constant.

Claim 28 (Original): The apparatus as claimed in claim 27, wherein said image carriers, said primary image transferring means and said intermediate image transferring means comprise photoconductive drums, image transfer rollers and an intermediate image transfer belt, respectively.

Claim 29 (Currently Amended): In an electrophotographic image forming method using an image forming section, which includes an image carrier and image transferring means, for transferring a toner image from said image carrier to a recording medium being conveyed by an endless belt while electrostatically adhering to said belt, assuming that a surface of said image carrier and a surface of said belt move at a speed of V_d and a speed of V_b , respectively, a ratio of V_b/V_d is variable by a user wherein the belt speed V_b is maintained substantially constant.

Claim 30 (Currently Amended): In an electrophotographic image forming method using an image forming section, which includes an image carrier and image transferring means, for transferring a toner image from said image carrier to a recording medium being conveyed by an endless belt while electrostatically adhering to said belt, assuming that a surface of said image carrier and a surface of said belt move at a speed of V_d and a speed of V_b , respectively, a ratio of V_b/V_d is variable by either one of a service person and a person expected to deal with troubles wherein the belt speed V_b is maintained substantially constant.

Claim 31 (Original): In an electrophotographic image forming method using an image forming section, which includes an image carrier and image transferring means, for transferring a toner image from said image carrier to a recording medium being conveyed by an endless belt while electrostatically adhering to said belt, assuming that a surface of said image carrier and a surface of said belt move at a speed of V_d and a speed of V_b , respectively, a ratio of V_b/V_d is variable for each of a plurality of process linear velocities.

Claim 32 (Currently Amended): In an electrophotographic image forming method using an image forming section, which includes an image carrier and image transferring means, for transferring a toner image from said image carrier to a recording medium being conveyed by an endless belt while electrostatically adhering to said belt, assuming that a surface of said image carrier and a surface of said belt move at a speed of V_d and a speed of V_b , respectively, a ratio of V_b/V_d is variable in accordance with a kind of the recording medium wherein the belt speed V_b is maintained substantially constant.

Claim 33 (Currently Amended): In an electrophotographic color image forming method using a plurality of image forming sections, which include an image carrier and primary image transferring means each, arranged side by side in a direction of movement of endless intermediate image transferring means for sequentially transferring toner images from individual image carriers to said intermediate image transferring means with primary image transferring means and then transferring a resulting composite toner image from said intermediate image transferring means to a recording medium being conveyed at a secondary image transfer position, assuming that a surface of said intermediate image transferring means and a surface of said recording medium move at a speed of V_i and a speed of V_p ,

respectively, a ratio of V_p/V_i is variable by a user wherein the speed V_i is maintained substantially constant.

Claim 34 (Currently Amended): In an electrophotographic color image forming method using a plurality of image forming sections, which include an image carrier and primary image transferring means each, arranged side by side in a direction of movement of endless intermediate image transferring means for sequentially transferring toner images from individual image carriers to said intermediate image transferring means with primary image transferring means and then transferring a resulting composite toner image from said intermediate image transferring means to a recording medium being conveyed at a secondary image transfer position, assuming that a surface of said intermediate image transferring means and a surface of said recording medium move at a speed of V_i and a speed of V_p , respectively, a ratio of V_p/V_i is variable by a service person or a person expected to deal with troubles wherein the speed V_i is maintained substantially constant.

Claim 35 (Currently Amended): In an electrophotographic color image forming method using a plurality of image forming sections, which include an image carrier and primary image transferring means each, arranged side by side in a direction of movement of endless intermediate image transferring means for sequentially transferring toner images from individual image carriers to said intermediate image transferring means with primary image transferring means and then transferring a resulting composite toner image from said intermediate image transferring means to a recording medium being conveyed at a secondary image transfer position, assuming that a surface of said intermediate image transferring means and a surface of said recording medium move at a speed of V_i and a speed of V_p ,

respectively, a ratio of V_p/V_i is variable for each of a plurality of process linear velocities
wherein the speed V_i is maintained substantially constant.

Claim 36 (Currently Amended): In an electrophotographic color image forming method using a plurality of image forming sections, which include an image carrier and primary image transferring means each, arranged side by side in a direction of movement of endless intermediate image transferring means for sequentially transferring toner images from individual image carriers to said intermediate image transferring means with primary image transferring means and then transferring a resulting composite toner image from said intermediate image transferring means to a recording medium being conveyed at a secondary image transfer position, assuming that a surface of said intermediate image transferring means and a surface of said recording medium move at a speed of V_i and a speed of V_p , respectively, a ratio of V_p/V_i is variable in accordance with a kind of the recording medium
wherein the speed V_i is maintained substantially constant.

Claim 37 (Currently Amended): In an electrophotographic color image forming method using a plurality of image forming sections, which include an image carrier and primary image transferring means each, arranged side by side in a direction of movement of endless intermediate image transferring means for sequentially transferring toner images from individual image carriers to said intermediate image transferring means with primary image transferring means and then transferring a resulting composite toner image from said intermediate image transferring means to a recording medium being conveyed at a secondary image transfer position, assuming that a surface of said image carrier and a surface of said intermediate image transferring means move at a speed of V_d and a speed of V_i , respectively,

a ratio of V_d/V_i is variable by a user wherein the speed V_i is maintained substantially constant.

Claim 38 (Currently Amended): In an electrophotographic color image forming method using a plurality of image forming sections, which include an image carrier and primary image transferring means each, arranged side by side in a direction of movement of endless intermediate image transferring means for sequentially transferring toner images from individual image carriers to said intermediate image transferring means with primary image transferring means and then transferring a resulting composite toner image from said intermediate image transferring means to a recording medium being conveyed at a secondary image transfer position, assuming that a surface of said image carrier and a surface of said intermediate image transferring means move at a speed of V_d and a speed of V_i , respectively, a ratio of V_d/V_i is variable by a service person or a person expected to deal with troubles wherein the speed V_i is maintained substantially constant.

Claim 39 (Original): In an electrophotographic color image forming method using a plurality of image forming sections, which include an image carrier and primary image transferring means each, arranged side by side in a direction of movement of endless intermediate image transferring means for sequentially transferring toner images from individual image carriers to said intermediate image transferring means with primary image transferring means and then transferring a resulting composite toner image from said intermediate image transferring means to a recording medium being conveyed at a secondary image transfer position, assuming that a surface of said image carrier and a surface of said intermediate image transferring means move at a speed of V_d and a speed of V_i , respectively, a ratio of V_d/V_i is variable for each of a plurality of process linear velocities.

Claim 40 (Currently Amended): In an electrophotographic color image forming method using a plurality of image forming sections, which include an image carrier and primary image transferring means each, arranged side by side in a direction of movement of endless intermediate image transferring means for sequentially transferring toner images from individual image carriers to said intermediate image transferring means with primary image transferring means and then transferring a resulting composite toner image from said intermediate image transferring means to a recording medium being conveyed at a secondary image transfer position, assuming that a surface of said image carrier and a surface of said intermediate image transferring means move at a speed of V_d and a speed of V_i , respectively, a ratio of V_d/V_i is variable in accordance with a kind of the recording medium wherein the speed V_i is maintained substantially constant.